MUSEUM ON MAIN STREET
A Museum Of County Life

# IMPRESSIONS

WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER • MAY 2003

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Annual dues are individual, $15; couple/family $25; student or senior (60+) $10; senior couple $19; business/association $50; patron $100.

## Your Museum And Society

President **Pauline Walters** remains a busy beaver since she is at the museum every day and there are always visitors and volunteers to manage, as well as tradesmen to fix our various problems. We are still waiting for bids on painting the fence and repairing the drain at the foot of the rear entry. We have had Bill Click of Milan fix the handrails on our staircase and he is scheduled to re-hang the back door in a few weeks. We're hoping to finally get these things finished! Pauline also worked (along with Sue Kosky, Judy Chrisman and Joan Koerschen) at the B 'N T (Better 'n Texas) affair in Saline and sold over $200 in books and other items. Lots of interest was shown in our things.

Our new brochure is out. Our old one from 1996 needed considerable updating, so we edited it and a new batch of 5,000 has been printed. They will be very useful when we have booths at various shows around town.

**Sue Kosky** reports that the "throw" featuring 19 Washtenaw County Historical attractions ("The Consortium") is beautiful and will soon be in production. We will be ordering 200 that will be sold at a pre-production price of $45 and a post-production price of $50 after June 1. Sue and **George Taylor** are coordinating this project and each consortium member will buy about 10 to sell. This is a wonderful opportunity to showcase the beautiful historic attractions of Washtenaw County. I encourage you all to go to the Museum (where our exhibit on Northfield and Pittsfield Townships has been held over for a month) to check it out (and place an order!). The throw will also be on display at Kerrytown on market days, so look for it there as well. The throw will be ready in early June. The Consortium is also busy getting out its new brochure. Look for our booth with them at the **Ann Arbor Art Fair, July 16-19th.** Check it out at our website at **www.washtenawhistory.org/history.**

The **Garden Committee** has met and is asking for volunteers to work either an hour a week or an hour a month. Help is needed with watering, weeding, mulching and mowing. Interested? Call us at **734-662-9092.**

Our **website** looks better every month, thanks to the volunteer work of **Ed Wall** of Pittsfield Township. Thank you again Ed for helping us out in this endeavor. Thanks also to board member **Randy LaHote** who is chairing the committee to write a job description for a **part time director** for the museum. A brainstorming session was held on April 3 and a decision to hire someone for 20 hours a week for 50 weeks was reached. This person will be responsible for managing the day to day operations of the museum, including the scheduling of docents, mounting exhibits, performing educational outreach to the schools and do some fund raising and doing public relations work. It's a tall order but we know there are many talented people in Ann Arbor. Once we have a better handle on our income from the Bach Fund, we will be posting this position. This should be within the next six months.

We are sad to have to report another death of a former board member. Our former gardener, **Ella Grenier,** died April 19 in Naples, Florida where she had moved a few years ago after suffering a

*Continued on page 8*

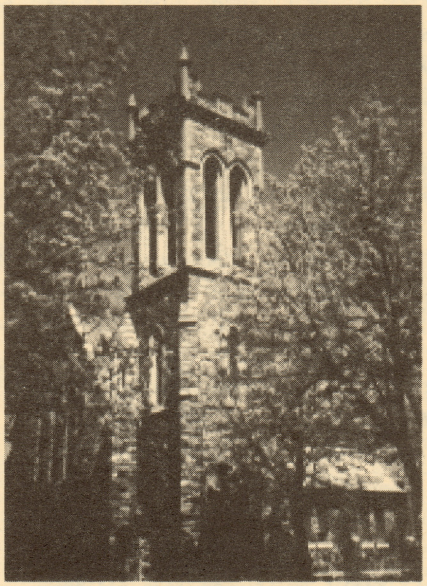
# The Historic Old Fourth Ward And St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

On a glorious spring day, over 225 people came to St. Andrew's Episcopal Church at 306 N. Division Street to have guided tours of the stained glass windows in the main sanctuary and the immediate neighborhood surrounding the church—known today as the **Old Fourth Ward Historic District.** This event capped a year of celebration of the 175th anniversary of the founding of the parish in 1827. Leading the window tour of the church, which was built in 1867 to designs by the famous architect **Gordon Lloyd** in the **Gothic Revival** style, was **H. Mark Hildebrandt.** Hildebrandt is a local pediatrician, a native of Ann Arbor and currently a member of the Ann Arbor Historic District Commission. His roots at St. Andrew's reach far back into the 20th century, to 1936 when he sang boy soprano in the choir. He continues to sing in the choir today and assembled a team of church members to research individual windows. Hildebrandt's publication entitled ***The Windows of St. Andrew's***, was on sale at the event. This beautifully illustrated book is available for $26.45 from the church.

Louisa Pieper, H. Mark Hildebrandt and Grace Shackman are ready to give their tours. Photo: Susan Wineberg.

Two local historians, **Grace Shackman** and **Louisa Pieper** gave the neighborhood tour. Pieper served as the staff for the Ann Arbor Historic District Commission from 1976 until she retired in 1999. Shackman writes a history column for the ***Ann Arbor Observer*** and has published two books of photographs on Ann Arbor. Both have taught courses on architectural styles and the history of Ann Arbor to the Ann Arbor Public Schools and at Washtenaw Community College. They are currently most active in setting up the **Street Exhibit Program,** the series of glass historical markers along the main streets of the town. A highlight of this walking tour was the access to the 1843 **Wilson-Wahr house** at 126 N. Division, graciously opened for inspection by its current owners, **Norm and Ilene Tyler.**

Special thanks to **Tish Neidhardt** of St. Andrew's for coordinating the tours, the refreshments and the sales tables. **Sue Kosky,** our Museum Shop Coordinator, reported that we made $209 and got two new memberships. But even more important was that WCHS and St. Andrew's had a great working relationship.



St. Andrew's Church, an 1867 Gothic Style building by architect Gordon Lloyd. The tower was added in 1903 by Love Palmer to honor her husband, Alonzo Palmer. Photo: S. Wineberg.

Future tours are being considered 'as we speak.'

## The Windows of St. Andrew's

Dr. Hildebrandt assembled a team of parishioners known as the St. Andrew's History Group who researched specific windows. These volunteers included **Rohn Federbush, Ralph Williams, Barbara Becker, Alice Sano, Rose Crandall, Ann Garvin, Barbara Mackey,** and **George Williams.** There were 12 pairs of windows in the 1860s portion of the building and three in the west wall (for a total of 27), designed in an English country church style. These early windows were done in a geometric pattern and were slowly replaced over time beginning in 1890 when the chancel was expanded with the beautiful East Window given in memory of Ebenezer Wells and his daughter Sarah.

Originally, the windows were leaded glass in colored arcs and quadrangular geometric patterns with some floral designs painted on the uncolored panes. Today, 11 of these windows have been replaced by "memorial windows," windows dedicated to a particular person or persons with representations from their lives and Christian theology. Many of the windows have musical themes (four are dedicated to Palestrina, Brahms, Bach and Cesar Franck), and honor musical members. As Hildebrandt notes "...the Gothic Revival is particularly suited to the installation of stained glass memorial windows..." and these neo-Gothic windows were seen as more in keeping with the style of the church than the original windows.

Other themes covered in the memorial windows include Christ the Peacemaker, St. Gregory, St. Margaret of Scotland, The Venerable Bede, St. Paul, Dorcas, St. Columba, Bishop Brent, Christ and the Little Children, Christ the Divine Physician, St. Francis of Assisi, the St. Andrew Cross and the rustic cross. The Willet Studio of Philadelphia, a well-known stained glass

firm, did many of the windows. Other studios include the Friedricks Stained Glass Studio of Brooklyn NY, James Powell and Son of (Whitefriars) Middlesex, England; and D.M. Dewey of Rochester NY. But the most unusual window, the Angel Window, stands out from the others in its use of rich flowing colors and the large figure of an angel with lilies. It is rumored to have been done by Tiffany but there is no real proof and it is not signed or on any Tiffany lists. Still, if not a Tiffany it is definitely in the spirit of Tiffany.

When the church was dedicated in 1869, two memorial windows existed—one on the north wall and one on the south. One was to Lucy Ann Kingsley, wife of James Kingsley one of Ann Arbor's most prominent early citizens. This window was moved to the west wall of the hall connecting the church to the parish hall c. 1940. The other memorial window, dedicated to Jane Lathrop Gillespie, was simply removed and has not been found. A triple lancet window originally graced the chancel which was much shallower than it is now. These were removed and replaced by the Wells Memorial Window in 1890. A blurry photograph from 1880 shows these lancet windows and can be found in the book.

## The Old Fourth Ward Historic District

Grace Shackman and Louisa Pieper led separate tours (twice!) of this historic district, which was established in 1983 by the Ann Arbor City Council. The boundaries of the district are Huron Street on the south, Glen Ave. on the east, Depot Street on the North, and Fifth Av. and Detroit Street on the west. Sunday's tour was a sample of the district and included North Division, Ann Street, State Street and Lawrence St. You can read more about all these houses in a book written by Marjorie Reade and yours truly entitled ***Historic Buildings, Ann Arbor, Michigan,*** revised in 1998 and available through our museum shop as well as local bookstores.

Across from St. Andrew's at **303 N. Division** is the Andrew DeForest House, built in 1845. DeForest was a

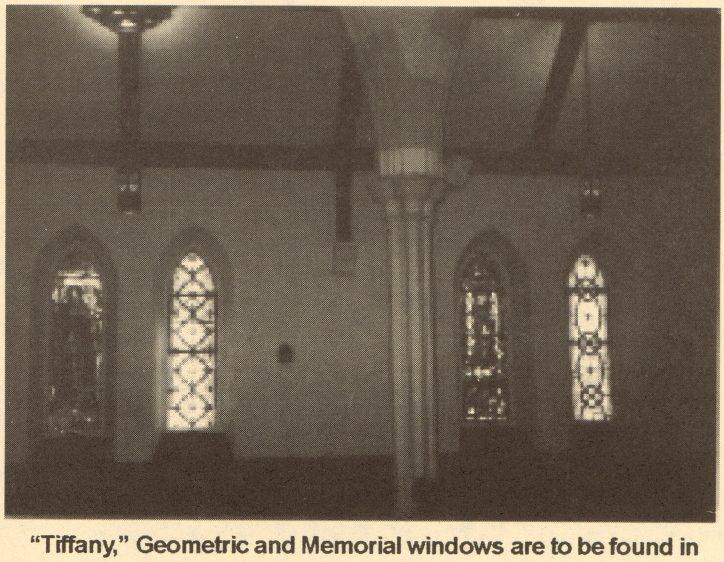
**The nave of St. Andrew's looking east at the East Window.**

local builder who also built two Greek Revival houses on N. State Street, one of which is still standing today at 712 E. Ann St. The house at 303 was originally more in a Greek Revival style, with a portico of columns. It was substantially altered to look more "colonial" in the 1920s and was the Colonial Inn (a tearoom) in the 1930s.

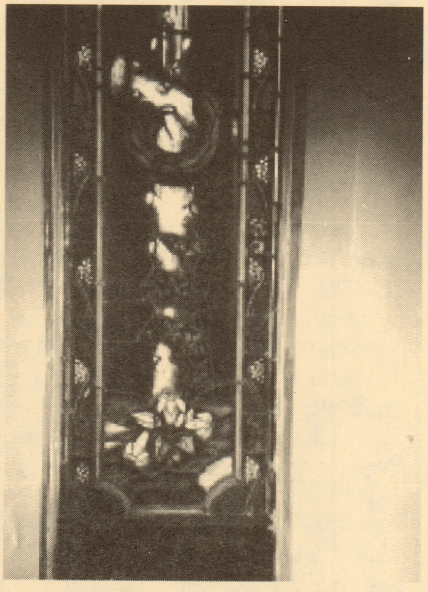
Just south of the church stands the federal style brick house at **218 N. Division** built in 1844 by John Maynard, son of an early Ann Arbor pioneer. Recently remodeled back to a single family home after being used as Canterbury House by St. Andrew's (from 1950-1992), and Trailblazers (1992-2002), this home is now for sale for over $1 million. Just to the south of this house stands the burnt-out Wells-Babcock House built by Ebenezer Wells (see windows in chancel of church) in 1858 and damaged by a fire in January 2003.

After crossing Ann St, we were graciously welcomed into the home of Norm and Ilene Tyler, the Wilson-Wahr (1843) house at **126 N. Division.** While standing at this corner, Ms. Pieper pointed out the Palmer-Ryan House at **205 N. Division** (1855/1867) as a wonderful example of early and late Italianate architecture and Gothic Revival styles. Pieper noted that Love Palmer, the widow of Dr. Alonzo Palmer, willed part of her estate to build the bell tower at St. Andrew's which was constructed in 1903 but designed by Gordon Lloyd before his death. Of particular note in this house is a hand painted mural on the wall along the staircase, depicting the immigration of the Staebler family to America from Germany. Also at this corner is the Moses Rogers House at **121 N. Division** (1851). It is an example of the transition from the Greek Revival to the Italianate style. Features of the Italianate style include round topped windows, paired eave brackets and overhanging eaves. The Moses Rogers house shows its Greek Revival roots in the typical door in this style with sidelights and a transom and its engaged pilasters. The four houses at this intersection are some of the best examples of period building styles of the 19th century to be found anywhere in Ann Arbor.

The Tylers purchased the Wilson-Wahr house in 2002 from Charlotte Sallade, widow of George Wahr Sallade. The property had been in this family for over 100 years, beginning in 1892 when George's grandfather George Wahr purchased it at a tax sale. It was immediately rented to fraternities and sororities, while Wahr and his wife began building a Queen Anne style house on the southern portion of the lot. They deemed the Greek Revival home, with its indoor well and massive Ionic columns, too old fashioned for their taste. During the construction of their home (now **120 N. Division**), Mrs. Wahr visited the Lee Mansion in Arlington, Virginia and



**"Tiffany," Geometric and Memorial windows are to be found in the main sanctuary of St. Andrew's and date to 1867 and the 1920s. Photo: S. Wineberg**



**"The Rustic Cross" window in honor of Lucy Ann Kingsley, the oldest memorial window (1868) in the church. Photo: S. Wineberg**

**Angel ("Tiffany") window c. 1910 in honor of Samuel and Adele Garrigues. Photo: Susan Wineberg.**

**Tourgoers hear about 126 N. Division (Wilson-Wahr house) from the owners Norm and Ilene Tyler. Photo: S. Wineberg**

realized her Ann Arbor property was a gem. She wired her husband to "stop construction" and the story goes that this is the only time Mr. Wahr ever disobeyed his wife. They lived in their Queen Anne home until 1916 when they moved into their Greek Revival house. Norm Tyler pointed out that the proportions of the house are perfect and that the flutes on the columns are individual pieces of wood. This is an amazing feat and they are still solid after 170 years! The stucco is over 3 widths of brick and is scored to look like stone (to resemble a Greek temple). This treatment can also be found on the UM Detroit Observatory and several other buildings in town. A special lime stucco was used before it was scored.

This house is probably Ann Arbor's most famous 19th century house (the 20th century belongs to the Palmer House designed by Frank Lloyd Wright) and has been featured in numerous publications on the Greek Revival style and on early pioneer architecture of the Northwest Territories. Upon entering, one is shown the gas chandelier that was never converted to electricity (and hence is useless and there only to admire). Moving into the first of two parlors, one sees former gas chandeliers now converted to electricity and marble fireplaces, as well as an intricately decorated wood ceiling which was probably added by the Welles family (later owners) in the 1880s. Beautiful hardwood floors grace all the rooms which have 12-14' ceilings. The plaster on the walls is also in remarkably good shape. Aside from a bay window added in the 1890s, and the decorated ceilings (as well as basics like electricity, plumbing, and heating facilities) the house appears to have changed little since the third addition was added c. 1850. It has been well loved ever since.

**205 N. Division, a Gothic and Italianate gem at the corner of Ann. Photo: S. Wineberg**

The first section appears to have been built around 1835 and is now the central portion of the house. Below it, in the basement, is the former kitchen, complete with an intact beehive oven. The dramatic front portion was built in 1843 and the rear wing added just before Judge Wilson sold the property to the Welles family and moved to Chicago. As we proceeded east down Ann St., which was designated in 1979 as the **Ann Street Historic Block,** we noticed girls sunbathing and heard stories from Ms. Pieper about the various houses and their owners. Two stand out and one involves the creation of the historic district.

In 1977, owners who lived on the block learned of the Campus Inn's plans to demolish the lovely Colonial/ Queen Anne style house at **610 E. Ann** to have an exit from their parking lot. They petitioned the city to establish a study committee to look into creating a historic district for the block (one of the narrowest in the city and one of the few having NO 20th century buildings disturbing its 19th century rhythm). After two years of study, the committee recommended the block be designated and it became the Ann Street Historic Block in April of that

year. One of the major factors in preventing the demolition of 610 up to this point was a lawsuit filed by George Sallade, which prevented demolition until the study committee made its recommendations. Despite the ordinance however, the Campus Inn attempted to demolish the structure once Sallade dropped the suit after the district was established, and it was only the watchfulness of the neighbors that prevented a demolition tragedy. The owners were suitably chided by the City Administrator and they have behaved themselves ever since.

The second tale involved **607 E. Ann,** a house that was converted to apartments in the late 1930s. It was gutted by fire in 1982, the result of a firebomb which left one man dead and another severely

**610 E. Ann St. (1894) whose demolition threat was the catalyst for the Old Fourth Ward Historic District. Photo: Susan Wineberg**

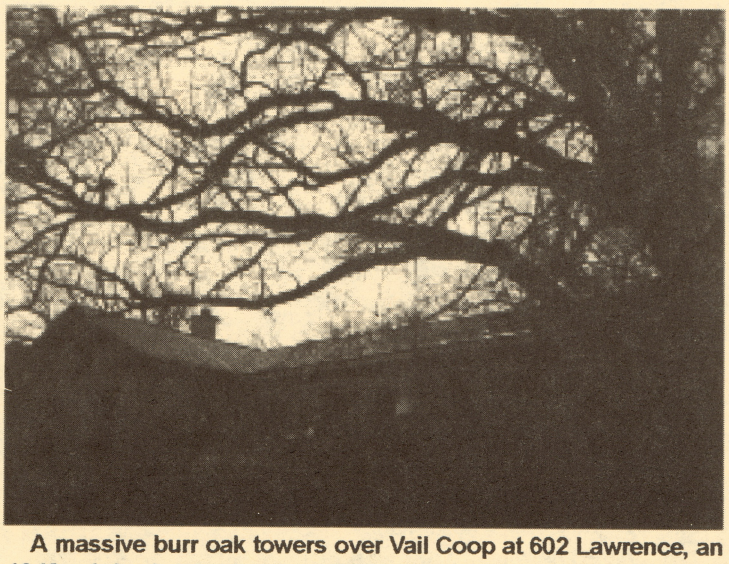
burned. It apparently was the result of an argument about hashish! Ms. Pieper helped the owner, a Polish immigrant who had escaped the horrors of World War II only to have this happen. She advised the owners on how to reconfigure the interior so that the fire escape could be moved to the side of the house (it had been on the front and was very unattractive). She also helped them restore the distinctive fish-scale shingles and sunburst in the roof gable. This was the beauty of being in a historic district!

While standing at the corner of Ann and State looking east, Pieper pointed out the former Unitarian Church and parsonage (now Hobbs and Black Architects) and the house at 712 E. Ann which stood at the SE corner facing west and was moved in 1898 to its current location. It became a rental and its first tenant was Nellie Loving, Ann Arbor's earliest paid librarian and after whom the Loving branch is named. At the NE corner stands 200 N. State built in 1928, a brick apartment building in a Tudor Revival style, noted for its multi-paned casement windows and asymmetrical design and fancy brick diaper work. The Historic District Commission worked with the owners to have appropriate replacement windows here and in its twin at 322 N. State.

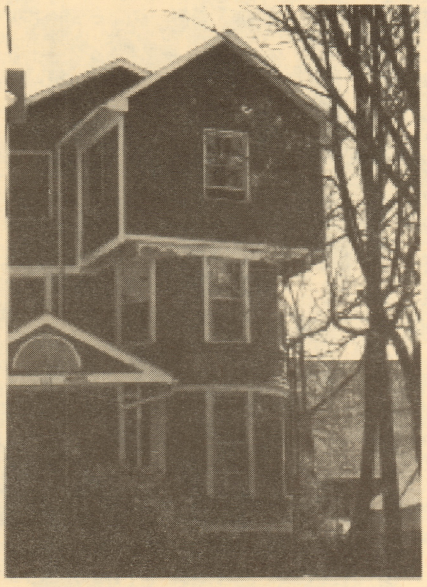
**200 N. State Street, a 1929 Tudor Revival style apartment building, had its windows replaced with appropriate casements. Photo: Susan Wineberg**

As we proceeded down State Street we passed the bright purple house that is the home of Minnie's Co-op (**307 N. State,** built in 1882 by Ellen Morse), a UM ICC Co-op since 1970 when it was purchased from the estate of Minnie Wallace who had run a well-loved boarding house here. The co-op's constitution requires that the house be purple and it has become a beloved landmark in the neighborhood. Just beyond the intersection with Lawrence, Pieper pointed to **410 N. State**, a former Quaker meeting house built in 1851 and **418 N. State,** an 1854 scored stucco house built of adobe bricks in 1854 by another pioneer family named Prudden.

The tour turned west onto Lawrence St. and stopped in front of Vail Co-op at **602 Lawrence** to admire this Greek Revival home built by the Mitchell family in 1848 of adobe brick and—like 126 N. Division—covered with stucco and scored to resemble stone blocks. Massive oaks, some of the largest in Ann Arbor, envelop the house. Many books say these are the



**A massive burr oak towers over Vail Coop at 602 Lawrence, an 1848 adobe brick structure. It's believed these oaks are what prompted the "arbor" in the name "Ann Arbor." Photo: S. Wineberg**



**508 Lawrence, moved in the 1920s, had a 'ranch house' built on top before the historic district was created. Photo: S. Wineberg**

oaks from which the 'arbor' in 'Ann Arbor' is derived. The house was 'bungalowed' in the 1920s when porches of that era, with tapered columns, were added and the stucco rounded around the corners to resemble a more Mediterranean/Spanish revival style popular in the period. This house served as the Prettyman Boarding House from 1914 to 1945. The ICC bought the home in 1961 and named it after Stephen Vail (Stephanos Valavanis) one of their former presidents.

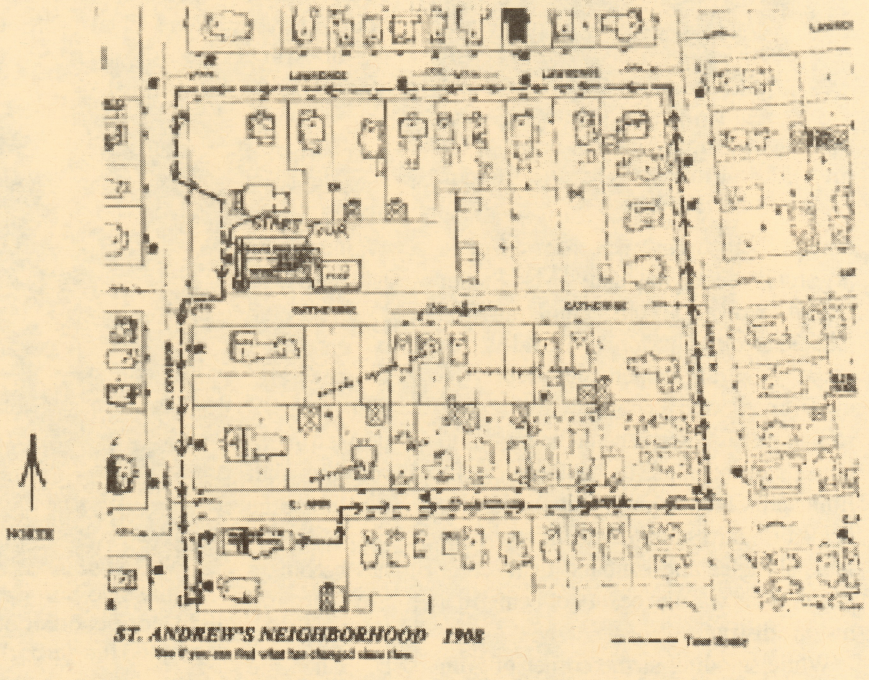
**Charles A. Chapin,** another pioneer (think of Chapin St.) who married Frances Kingsley and was also active in St. Andrew's affairs, built the home at **519 Lawrence** (1853). Their daughter was **Lucy Chapin**, who was active in the Washtenaw County Historical Society and gave many talks on her photographs of the earliest houses of the city. Pieper used this as an example of another value of being in a historic district. When the current owners painted the house, they removed the shutters and did not put them back. "Susan Wineberg kept bugging me about it and I kept writing them letters, all to no avail. Then they got someone on the ball working for them who found the shutters in the basement and hung them back up." Tourgoers did admire those shutters!

We stopped in front of **510 Lawrence**, an 1860s brick house with in inappropriate third floor added sometime after 1940. Next to and behind this house at **508 Lawrence,** stands an 1890s Queen Anne house with a half-turret, moved from the site of the current Community High in the 1920s when it was being built as Jones Elementary School. Before the Old Fourth Ward Historic District was established, a third floor was added to this house, but as Pieper put it, "they took a Victorian House and put a ranch house on top! This is why we need historic districts!"

**401 Lawrence (1890) a great example of the Queen Anne style and well maintained by its owner. Photo: Susan Wineberg**

We admired the beautiful Queen Anne home at **401 Lawrence** across the street (built by Mr. Rinsey, the partner of Mr. Seabolt who lived at 510). This is an example of good preservation and maintenance of an intact Queen Anne house, complete with tin roofed porch, shutters, fish scale shingles, fan work, colored glass windows and elaborate chimneys (one used to have an "R" for Rinsey placed on the side). Owner Ray Detter lives at 120 N. Division and beautifully maintains them both.

We returned to the church where we browsed through books on church and local history and munched on delicious goodies made by the volunteers of the church. "And a good time was had by all!"



# Around The Town

**April Beisaw** conducted a two-day archaeological dig at the **Kempf House** (312 S. Division St.) in an attempt to find the original outhouse. Beisaw, who has a degree in archaeology from SUNY-Binghamton, has been excavating in the county and giving lectures for the past year as she takes a break before returning to obtain her Ph.D. Although she didn't find it (which would have been a brick-lined structure), she and her team found many interesting items including complete medicine bottles, pipes, a stove lifter, bones, buttons, nails and china shards.

Kempf House is now featuring an **exhibit on the Bennett family** to honor the **Sesquicentennial** of the Greek Revival house constructed in 1853. Learn about Mr. Bennett's role as Secretary of the University of Michigan, and his descendants role in the establishment of Pasadena, California. Kempf House is open every Sunday from 1-4 PM until June 8. The house will then close for the summer and re-open with its first lecture on **Wednesday, September 10.** The speaker will be **Stephanie Taras** who will speak on how to do a personal biography. You can find out more by calling **734-994-4898.**

Meanwhile, on the west side of town, UM Archaeology grad student **Megan Howley** surveyed the northwest corner of **Liberty and S. Maple** for prehistoric remains and instead discovered a **historic brick kiln** built by **J. Audette ca. 1857.** This parcel, which was being surveyed before a development begins construction, lies in Scio Township and Howley will be recommending they do not proceed until further investigation has been made. This was an exciting find for those of us who love to know the history of our rapidly developing landscape!

Grace Shackman has finalized plans with **Alex Sulzer,** UM Senior Horticulturist, to have a **horticultural tour the UM Diag** on **Monday, June 16th** from 6:30-8:30 PM. He will be showing his favorite plants and giving out lots of fascinating information. Sulzer recently spoke at a recent meeting of the Old West Side Association.

The **UM Detroit Observatory** will be open **Wednesday May 21st,** and twice in **June—Sunday the 8th** and **Wednesday the 18th**. On the weekends they are open from 1-4 PM. The Observatory will be closed in July and August. You can call **734-763-2230** or visit **www.DetroitObservatory.umich.edu.**

**April Beisaw and volunteers conduct at dig at Kempf House to find the outhouse. Photo: S. Wineberg**

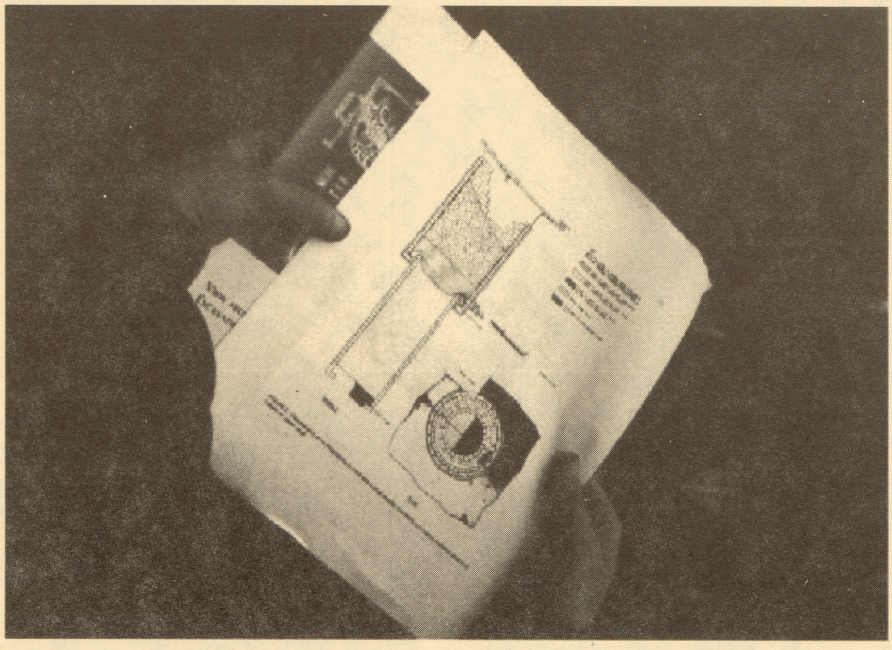
**Carol Mull,** Curator at Kempf House and Underground Railroad expert for Washtenaw County, recently spent an afternoon examining an 1830 autograph book belonging to **Phyla Baker.** This book was found lodged in the wall of the Sumner Hicks house, moved last year from Wall Street up Pontiac Trail by Tom Foley. This might not mean much to others, but to Carol it was a find because Phyla Baker later became the wife of Abolitionist **Guy Beckley** who lived at 1425 Pontiac Trail. The dates range from 1830-1833 and contain poems, remembrances and small sketches by friends in Rochester, NY, Brattelboro, VT, and Leicester, Winchester, Sudbury and Millbury, MA. It's a veritable tour of all the places from which the settlers of Ann Arbor arrived! The book needs conservation since there is worm damage to the cover but hopefully more will be done with this when it gets proper care. Thanks to **Tom Foley** for alerting us to this cool find!

**Kathy Duquette,** Publicity Chair for the **Farm and Garden Club,** has asked us to tell you that this year's **Garden Club Walk** will be held **Saturday, June 7.** The proceeds of the Walk always go to a deserving group—and WCHS was the first to receive their proceeds in 1991! Come and see our garden and how we wisely used those funds! This year's recipient will be the development and enhancement of a **Therapeutic Garden at Glacier Hills Retirement Center**. These tours are always interesting and I highly recommend them.

On **Sunday, May 18th** (not May 23rd) the **Genealogical Society of Washtenaw** County will hold its class entitled "***There are no Dumb Questions in Your Genealogical Research.***" In this class, a panel of members will answer questions on where to find information and how to get past a stumbling block in your research. Bring your questions with you! The meetings are held at the Education Center of St. Joseph Mercy Hospital off Huron River Drive at 1:30 PM. Use Parking Lot "P." Call **734-483-2799** or visit **www.hvcn.org/info/gswc.**

A four-hour public hearing was held April 7th on the proposed expansion of the **Washtenaw Hill Historic District** from 21 properties to 176. Several fraternities appeared *en masse* to claim they would be made homeless by being in a historic district. Many of us who happily live in historic districts, including myself, spoke in favor of expanding this district which would protect homes built by the second generation of professors and businessmen in Ann Arbor. Too much demolition and too many inappropriate alterations have occurred which makes a district necessary for this very transient area. Tempers are hot though as a small group of homeowners claims most people don't want the district. This district will do for the south side of town what the **Old West Side** and the **Old Fourth Ward Historic Districts** have done on the north and west side of central campus—stabilize the neighborhood and provide beauty and a better sense of community. City Council is taking its time to digest these arguments and do some more fact finding. We hope they find in the affirmative.

**Cobblestone Farm,** a city-owned 1844 Cobblestone house, has many activities over the summer, especially for children. The farm is open for tours Memorial Day



An outhouse in plan, lined with brick. Photo: S. Wineberg

weekend through Labor Day weekend, Saturday 10 AM-1 PM and Sunday 1 PM-4 PM. Groups can have tours by appointment year round. There will also be a special **Independence Day Celebration** on **Friday, July 4,** from noon-4 PM that will have lawn games, contests, watermelon, and a reading of the Declaration of Independence. There is also a small fee.

This summer there are plans to reconstruct a chicken coop at Cobblestone Farm, and plans have been made based on historic photographs and corroborated by archaeological reports. "This dream will become a reality thanks to the generosity of longtime volunteer **Esther Warzynski**" (a former WCHS Board member!) who was inspired to donate it in memory of her mother who raised chickens in Flint. **Peter and Rita Heydon** have generously matched Esther's gift. For more information about summer events, call **734-994-2928.** The farm is located at **2781 Packard Road.**

We've been contacted again by **Mike Reitsma** in Burlingame, California who is a member of the **Argus Camera Collectors Group.** They are attempting to put together a guidebook for collectors and want to include as much as possible on the history of the company. So, all you Argus retirees out there, he needs to talk to you! You can email him at **mikepam@ix.netcom.com.**

# Your Museum And Society

*Continued from page 1.*

stroke. Ella managed our garden for the first nine years after we moved and made us look good before we were even open to the public! She was awarded a Golden Trowel Award from the Parks Department of the City of Ann Arbor that we proudly display in our entry. We send our condolences to her family.

And finally, we would like to remind our members that you can give to the society in many ways. Members can remember WCHS in their wills when they make their estate plans. This is an excellent way to provide us with financial support. Another method is to make a gift of paid life insurance if no longer needed for its original purpose. We are a 501(c)3 organization and donors receive tax deductions for such donations. Property can also be donated with significant tax advantages, as can gifts of securities. Confer with your tax consultant before making any decisions, however. There are many ways you can help us perform our mission better and more professionally.

This is the last newsletter until September and I wish everyone an enjoyable summer!

# News You Can Use

The **British National Trust** recently restored the childhood home of **John Lennon** (one of the Beatles, in case you don't remember) in **Liverpool** to its 1945-1963 period of significance. It opened recently to the public after it was purchased by his widow **Yoko Ono** and donated to the National Trust. You can view what they've done at **www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/news/mendips.html.** It's 'way cool' as they say.

Our own **National Trust (for Historic Preservation)** has a wonderful newsletter online that's chock full of information. If you're looking to travel this summer, they have their Historic Hotels list, plus information on events relating to the Bicentennial of the **Louisiana Purchase** and the **Lewis and Clark Expedition.** They also offer a pocket guide to historic architectural styles, advice on how to cool your kitchen while keeping its architectural integrity, and how Revolving Funds can be used with a local partner to save endangered historic houses. It also highlights the drastic effect of the federal government's reduced budget on state preservation programs. Some states are threatening to abolish them entirely! Luckily, Michigan is not on that list.

You can also start planning now to attend the **National Preservation Conference September 30-October 5, 2003.** It will be in **Denver**, with the theme "*New Frontiers in Preservation.*" It's never too early to plan ahead.

The **Michigan Stained Glass Census** is now online. It began in 1992 as a statewide effort to document the architectural stained glass in the state. With the help of volunteer Census Takers, hundreds of windows and other architectural glass have been located, recorded and photographed. You can help too by nominating stained glass windows they may have overlooked. Contact them at **http://museum.msu.edu/museum/msgc/index.htm.** or **call 517-432-3355** or **517-527-8973.**

# Around Washtenaw

Many of our area attractions are revved up and open to the public throughout the summer. The **Saline Area Historical Society** offers you the **Rentschler Farm** and the **Railroad Depot** which are open Saturdays (except holiday weekends) from 11 AM- 3 PM. The Farm, built in 1906, is an interpretation of a farmstead and its outbuildings from the 1930s. It is located at 1265 Michigan Avenue, just east of the Saline Visteon Plant. The **Depot Museum** is located at 402 N. Ann Arbor St and is a restored 19th century station with a freight house, livery barn, furnished caboose and station agent's office. The exhibits here focus on the history of the Saline Area. Call **734-944-0442** for more information.

The Society also recently earned some money by selling sections of the historic iron fence from the **Oakwood Cemetery**. The Cemetery Board and City of Saline decided a new fence was necessary and luckily SAHS was able to obtain it before it was scrapped. The Society raised about $17,000 which will be used to build a new outdoor rest room at the Rentschler Farm.

The **Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation** hosts its **Annual Marker Awards Banquet** on **Wednesday, May 28th**. In **August** on **Sunday the 17th**, they will host the Annual Historic Home Tour in conjunction with the Ypsilanti Heritage Festival. Mark those calendars! It is always a treat.

Speaking of Ypsilanti, two days after reading that **Jack Miller's Automotive Heritage Museum** was in financial trouble, there appeared a wonderful article on the museum (and the last Hudson dealership) in the ***New York Times.*** Let's hope that got some people to step up to the plate and restore the funding that had previously been generously donated by Skip Ungrodt. According to a May 1 article in the ***Ann Arbor News***, they have been flooded with donations and support and state officials are working to get MDOT grants and others to make up the difference. We wish them great success!

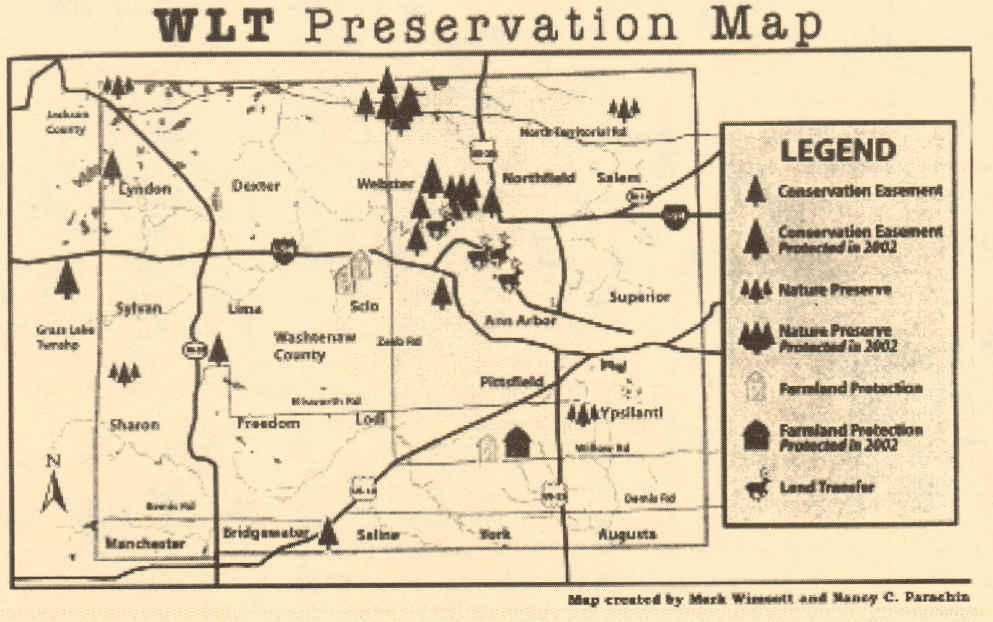
Students and faculty in the **Historic Preservation Program** at **Eastern Michigan University** were highlighted in an article May 4th as they fussed over an **18th century cannon** brought up from the depths of the Detroit River. Students learn conservation work while also finding out who made the cannon and how it got into the river. The Detroit chapter of the Society of Colonial Wars supplied $5,000 for this effort!

The **Ypsilanti Historical Museum and Archives** is a fascinating place, full of mementos of past residents and archives on city history. The Museum, located in the historic 1860 Asa Dow mansion at 220 N. Huron St., is open Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays from 2-4 PM or by appointment for groups. Admission is free. Call them at **734-482-4990.**

A new museum at **Sharon Mills County Park** in **Sharon Township** opened for the first time in April of this year. This former flour mill, which dates to 1850, was purchased by the county in 2000 and renovated as a county park for $1 million. It is on Sharon Hollow Road south of Bethel Church Road, northwest of Manchester. The mill is also famous for being one converted to generate electricity by Henry Ford in the 1930s and that machinery is on view as well.

The **Washtenaw Land Trust** reports they continue to expand their membership base and the acreage they protect. Their last newsletter published a map showing their various holdings. They also let us know we can support them by buying **wildflower seeds** from **Joseph Wissing.** They will donate $1.50 to the Land Trust for every packet of seeds they sell to WLT supporters. The seeds are available at www.**manchesterseeds.com** or by calling **734-428-1916.** The Washtenaw Land Trust can be reached at **734-302-5263** or by visiting **www.washtenawlandtrust.org.**

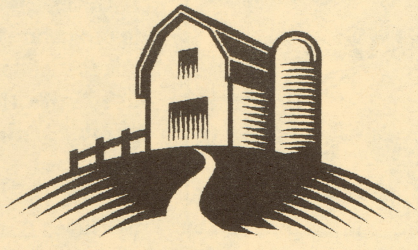
We read in the ***Ann Arbor News*** of April 7th that the historic **St. Joseph Church** in **Dexter** may become a new village hall, district library or senior housing, at least if village officials have a say. The church is planning to move to a new site outside the village on North Territorial and Mast Roads in Webster Township. The parish was established in 1840 and the Gothic style chapel with 180-foot steeple was built in 1872. Several renovations followed and a school was run there as well until 1968. Church officials however say it is premature to talk about future uses of the church at this time.



Map created by Mark Wimsett and Nancy C. Parachin

the **UM Matthaei Botanical Gardens** are presenting a barn workshop on **Saturday, June 21,** using the **Matteson Farm** barns on **Dixboro Road** for hands-on restoration techniques. The MBPN will provide experts in historical barn restoration and construction techniques to conduct five workshops for preserving barns. The five workshops deal with stone foundations, window restoration, barn painting, hand-hewn timbers and barn flooring. The workshops are from 9-1 and 12-4. Each is $35 for members and $45 for non-members. You can do both for $55 for members, ($65 for non-members. Get details and register at **www.lsa.umich.edu/mbg/events.html.**

Last but not least, we encourage you to look at the **new website** developed by **Marnie Paulus** and her staff in the Washtenaw County Planning Department. The website, at **www.ewashtenaw.org//government/departments/planning_environment/historic_preservation/HistWeb_welcome,** was launched May 5th in honor of national Historic Preservation Week. The website is a database of over 4,000 Historic Resources of Washtenaw County. It contains survey information and sketches of properties more than 50 years old that have been gathered over the past 25 years. You can read about these properties, view aerial imagery and map nearby natural features using their new online mapping interface. You can also get a list of Greek Revival houses and then have them mapped across the county. This sounds really cool! This is a federally funded project made possible by a partnership between the Washtenaw County Historic District Commission and the State Historic Preservation Office. Congratulations!



# Beyond Washtenaw

As you know, historic home tours abound in the Detroit Metro Area in the spring and summer. One of the best is the **Indian Village Homes Tour**, which will be held this year on **Saturday, June 7th** from 10 AM to 5 PM. There will be 10 stops on the tour with homeowners showing their homes, gardens, or both. Also on view will be the Centennial Garden built in 1995 and the Albert Kahn-designed Waldorf School. Indian Village is near Belle Isle off Jefferson Avenue and is the second oldest historic district in Michigan. Most of the houses were built between 1895 and 1929 and many were designed by Albert Kahn. Tickets in advance are $12 and $15 the day of the tour. For more information call **313-922-0911**. For an extra $5.00 this year you can get a special guided Ghost's Tour!

Also in Detroit, **Preservation Wayne** offers walking tours **every Saturday** at 10 AM and a Skyscraper Tour at 5:30 every Tuesday through September. The starting point for the downtown tour is the lobby of the Hotel Pontchartrain at 2 Washington Blvd. They also offer an Eastern Market Tour, Midtown Tour, and an Auto Heritage Tour. The price is a reasonable $10 and the number is **313-577-7674.** Find out more at **www.preservationwayne.org.**

**Saturday, June 14** is an important date. There will be guided tours of the historic **Ford Motor Piquette Avenue Plant** given by the **Model T Heritage Complex** to honor the 100th birthday of Ford Motor Company. **Ford Motor Company** and **Buick** are both celebrating their **100th birthdays.** Many events are planned but the main event for Ford is the week of June 12-16. You can find out all you want to know from **www.celebrateford100.com** or by calling **866-4-100-FORD.** Buick will celebrate its birthday at the Flint Cultural Center grounds the week of July 23-27. Buick Clubs from all over the world will be coming to Flint to help celebrate. You can find out more about these events from **www.buickclub.org.**

I'm getting all this information from ***The Drive***, the publication of the Motor Cities-Automobile National Heritage Area (**ANHA**). They have a convenient list of all the car shows this summer, which is a whopping 21 events. The **Woodward Dream Cruise** is **August 16** this year and the **Corvette 50th Anniversary Parade** is **July 10-13.** Here in **Ann Arbor,** the **Rolling Sculpture Car Show** will be **July 11.**

The newsletter also has some fascinating information on some new museums. Along the **Middle Rouge,** the old **Phoenix Mill** is set to become the **Phoenix Mill Woman's Museum,** which will focus on **Ford Village Industry workers.** In **Lansing, the R.E. Olds Transportation Museum** is incorporating the collections of the Oldsmobile/GM Heritage Center, now closed. Lansing is gearing up for 2004, to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of **Reo Motor Car Company.** And in **Dearborn,** the **Henry Ford Museum** and **Greenfield Village** has changed its name to "***The Henry Ford: America's Greatest History Attraction.***" They are working with the Ford Rouge Complex to re-establish plant tours. I know a lot of people will be excited to hear that!

And if that isn't enough to satisfy your wanderlust, you can join the **National Parks Service Passport Program** and use it as a gateway to the 384 National Park sites (!) in the country. As of April, visitors to each of the nine Gateway Museums in the ANHA will get their passports stamped. Call ANHA for details on how to join.

The **Plymouth Historical Museum** (western Wayne County) has a new URL. You can visit them now at **http://plymouthlibrary.org/~history/.** They will continue their series known as 'Plymouth's Hidden History' with lectures on unusual businesses (**June 12** at the Box Bar), Plymouth's Milling History (**July 13** at the Museum), One Room Schoolhouses (Sunday, **August 10**, 2 PM), and Plymouth in the 20th century (**September 11,** 7:30). The museum is located at 155 S. Main Street in downtown Plymouth. Phone **734-455-8940.**

The Plymouth Museum newsletter noted that the State Historic Preservation Board has reviewed the nomination of the

**Jacob Fishbeck Farmstead** in **Genoa Township, Livingston County,** to the **National Register** on January 10, 2003. This is a classic Greek Revival upright and wing home and looks to date to around 1850.

The **Village of Franklin** was the first in Michigan to be accepted into the National Register of Historic Places in February 1969. At that time it was the first municipal historic district from the state to be listed in the National Register. Now the Village is using the staff and students in the **Historic Preservation Program** at EMU to bring their documentation up to today's standards for certification. They are now in the process of **recertifying the historic district** and trying to expand the boundaries to include historic farmsteads. But opposition has been fierce. Their newsletter (***Kite and Key***) states "the essential character of the 19th century district has been lost since 1969 to reconstruction." Well, they did also open their historical museum in September of 2002 which is housed in the **Jenny Derwish** house, built in the 1950s. You can contact the museum at **248-538-0565.**

Want a one-room schoolhouse? You can have the old "**Jug Corners Schoolhouse"** in **Kalamazoo County,** dating from ca. **1869,** just by moving it. The area was known for a Civil War era jug factory that allegedly produced the bricks of a house said to be on the Underground Railroad. It's a bit of a stretch, but hey, it's still a cool school. You can contact **Sue Nelson** at **sen1010@chartermi.net** or talk to **Nancy Finegood** at the **Michigan Historic Preservation Network** at **517-371-8080.**

The Network Newsletter is chock full of good information. The **City of Rochester Hills** recently conducted a historic resource survey of over 200 properties and has identified 19 potential local historic districts. One in particular is **Ferry Court,** a boulevard built in 1912 to house workers of the Ferry Seed Company. It contains 5 bungalows grouped around a park and is a microcosm of the garden city planning concept popular in the early 20th century.

The newsletter also reported that the **Sugar Hill Historic District** in Detroit has been nominated to the National Register. Detroiters are seeking to highlight these two blocks east of Woodward in an area bonded by John R, East Forest and East Canfield, the last remnant of a part of Detroit associated with the city's "black and tan" show bars which housed the Detroit jazz and bebop scene. This is the last vestige of Detroit's important music and African American social history and "may see new light through rehabilitation of its remaining buildings." Zachary and Associates prepared the nomination.

2002 was a big year for **Michigan Tax Credits.** MHNP reports that 227 projects in 24 counties applied for federal and state historic preservation tax credits. The rehab expenditures totaled $159.9 million in direct investment, which figures to over $342 million in total economic impact. Though some applications were quite small, the average cost of a rehab project using the credits was about $700,000.

# Kudos

Congratulations are in order to the **Street Exhibit Program** (those snazzy glass panels in the sidewalk with the old photographs and text). They were given the Government /Institutional Award by **the Michigan Historic Preservation Network** at their conference in Kalamazoo in April. Those responsible for this honor include **Ray Detter, Louisa Pieper, Grace Shackman, Norm and Ilene Tyler, and Heather Edwards.** The award recognized the SEP for "accomplishing positive changes in the historic preservation climate and activities which have made a significant contribution to the preservation of Michigan's heritage." They presented the award to Mayor Hieftje at a council meeting May 5th. Other MHPN awards included one to Cranbrook for the restoration of the sculpture "Jonah and the Whale" by **Carl Milles;** and a lifetime achievement award to **Dr. John Schwarz** for his dedication to the preservation of Michigan's heritage through legislative policy; various projects in Southeast Detroit; and recognized the book ***Kalamazoo: Lost and Found*** by Pam O'Connor and Lynn Houghton.

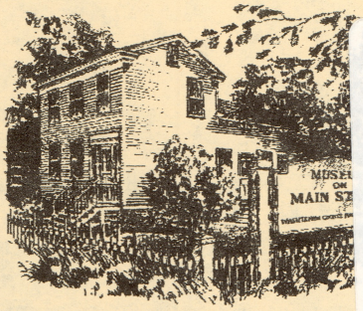
**Governor Jennifer Granholm** announced the first (annual) **Governor's Award** for **Historic Preservation Excellence** on May 9 and named five recipients in the state of Michigan. The owners of **506 E. Kingsley, Jeff** and **Christine Crockett,** received one of these awards for their use of tax credits in the restoration of their 1880s Queen Anne house in the Old Fourth Ward Historic District. This is a wonderful honor for our city and we congratulate them heartily!

Former Board member **Karen Simpson** had a one-page write up in the UM ***University Record*** (March 31, 2003) for her immersion in numerous extra pursuits. She is a Student Account Assistant II and a UM employee for 25 years, but also has worked on numerous museum boards, is a fabric artist, a Buffalo Soldier, a cook and a writer. We knew all those things about her, and are glad she is getting some recognition now. Congratulations Karen!

The **Ypsilanti Chamber of Commerce** recognized the work of Ypsilanti urban pioneer **Bill French** with its 2003 Distinguished Service Award. French, the owner of Cady's Grill and Aubree's Saloon helped transform **Depot Town** from a deteriorating neighborhood to a thriving business district. A native of Northville, French moved to Ypsilanti 32 years ago and bought several run down buildings for as little as $10,000 each. The 'pioneers' lived on the second floors while they renovated the lower ones into shops and restaurants. French has also served as chair of many other organizations in Ypsilanti and is a great example of the power of volunteerism. Congratulations to you and to Ypsilanti!

# Remember When

Here is another building that has been gone from the scene for almost 90 years. This is the **Elisha Jones School,** which was located where Community High is today. The current school was built in 1922, also as Elisha Jones School, at **401 N. Division** and 50 years later it became **Community High.** The original Jones School seen here was built in 1860 and named after Professor Jones, a UM Professor of Greek and Latin and the first Superintendent of the Public Schools in Ann Arbor. He died in 1888 and was eulogized by Jerome Knowlton who noted that "those who came in contact with his strong generous nature and his active and scholarly mind feel his teaching was true education..." This building housed 510 students before it was demolished and the new building constructed.



**WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Post Office Box 3336
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106-3336

## RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS

***ART FAIR:* WED 7/16 - SAT 7/19**

***Booth on Liberty St in NonProfit Area***

**Wednesday, Thursday & Friday**
**9:30 to 1:30 / 1:30 to 5:30 / 5:30 to 9:30**
**Saturday:**
**9:30 to 12:30 / 12:30 to 3:30 / 3:30 to 6:30**

***Art Fair Parking at TCF Bank***

**Wed, Thurs & Friday: 5:00 to 8:00**
**Saturday: 8:30 to Noon / Noon to 4:00**

**PLEASE PHONE: 734 / 662-9092**
**eMail: wchs-500@ameritech.net**

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